



# APPLES OF GOLD

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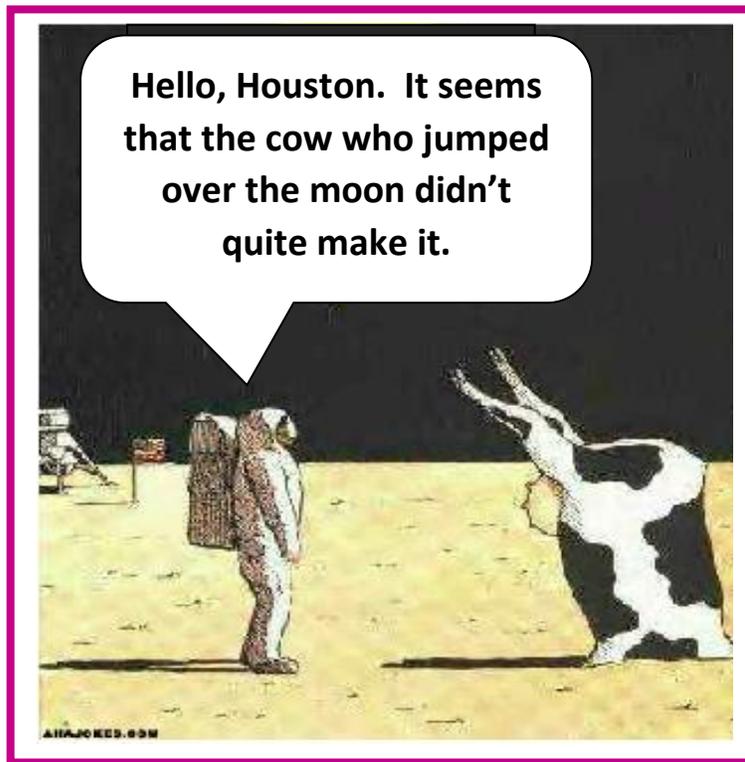
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Not Making It to Heaven

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## MISSING THE MARK



Do you think you're going to make it to Heaven? On what basis? *"Everybody talkin' 'bout Heaven ain't goin' there."* How about those who have no use for God or His Church here on earth, but assume they'll make it to Heaven? Why would they want to live eternally with the God of Heaven who will be the center of all joy, pleasure, and contentment, and the one we will worship forever? Some make an interesting statement about this. (See page 2)

They rationalize that Heaven is better than the alternative. That reasoning is faulty at its core. It's based on the fact that they will even make it to Heaven, when in reality – and sadly – they probably won't. That kind of thinking reveals that they are not a part of God's family because children of God by faith in Christ wouldn't make such a statement. This is because we have the assurance that we will make it to Heaven because we have the iron clad promise of God's Word that Heaven is our eternal destination (John 14:2). It's obvious that those who say it's the better of the two alternatives don't have the assurance of sins forgiven. Heaven is a place for perfect and holy people made righteous by faith in Christ's substitutionary payment for their sins on Calvary. Those not righteous in Christ have gone their own way; not God's way. They are not His children.

**THEY ARE LIKE THE COW WHO THOUGHT SHE WAS GOING TO MAKE IT, BUT ALAS....DID NOT.**

We come God's way or we cannot come at all. There is no other way. *"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me"* (John 14:6).

I've heard it said that God determines the day of our death and there is nothing we can do about it. I have been involved in eating healthy foods and exercising since our marriage in 1954. However, the statement about God determining the day we die caused me to do some research on this as well as counseling with our pastor. The following are some abbreviated thoughts from his counsel: Do we, or does God determine the day of our death? Both! Ultimately God determines the day of one's death because He is sovereign over all. However, man on this side of eternity determines the length of his days by how he lives. Somehow, some way in God's sovereignty I think all that we do by God's foreknowledge is taken into account and on the basis of that He determines our days. A good case in point is Hezekiah who prayed to God for more years after God told him you will die, so get your house in order. God heard his request and he lived nine more years. Somehow man's lifestyle, prayer, and reaching out to God determined how long he would live. If we sin we shorten our life. But, if we pursue and honor God we live longer as the Bible says. I think God saw Hezekiah living his life plus nine more years. He saw the heart of Hezekiah and so He already destined his days to be "one life plus nine." God sets our days, but we see it from a human effort perspective and are asked in His Word to live the way of obedience. We can affect our destiny by how we live.

**Matthew Henry - Prov 10:27-28**

*1. A belief in the one true God lengthens men's lives and crowns their hopes. What man is he that loves life? Let him fear God, and that will secure him from many things that would prejudice his life, and secure to him life enough in this world and eternal life in the other; the fear of the Lord will add days more than was expected, will add them endlessly, will prolong them to the days of eternity. What man is he that would see good days? Let him have faith in God, and then his days shall not only be many, but happy....*

*2. Wickedness shortens men's lives, and frustrates their hopes: The years of the wicked, that are spent in the pleasures of sin and the drudgery of the world, shall be shortened.*



**HIDDEN TREASURES**

**Last Month's Question:** On the tomb of which American president are inscribed these words of Christ, "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." **ANSWER: George Washington**  
**This Month's Question:** How did President Woodrow Wilson say it is possible to prove the Bible is the Word of God?



# GEMS FROM PASTOR ROB

## FEAST OR FAMINE

II Kings 6:24-31

### FEASTING ON GOD'S WORD

Remember that Satan has a plan to ruin our joy.

1. Feast in times of **hunger** (v. 25). Satan is behind all hunger. All the world is hungry – famine may yet come to America physically and in Amos 8:11, a famine of the hearing of the Word of God. We in the U.S. are eating a depraved diet (pornography, the Internet, TV, and most movies). If we're not fed properly, we'll eat junk.

2. Feast in times of **hatred**. The world doesn't love us. There's a price to pay when we live for God. There's also a prize to possess in eternity.

3. Feast in times of **helplessness**. People fight and attack one another – gossip – tearing down – criticism – sarcasm – rough emails. Sheep will bite one another if they're not fed. Instead, we are to restore one another in a spirit of meekness and humility (Gal. 6:1).

Here are **4** thieves that can rob us of our joy.



.....Written by Warren Wiersbe

1. Circumstances – if we look for joy in these, we'll be disappointed because these can make us miserable much of the time.
2. People – What they are, say, and do – and we can't be hermits
3. Things (Luke 12:15) – Will we know joy when we lose our treasures? (job, house, savings, car, and stuff)
4. Worry – the worst thief of all! We can purchase “sleep” with pills, but not “rest.”

**4** attitudes to cultivate to maintain our joy as found in Philippians:

1. A single mind – chapter 1 – one Person and one purpose
2. A submissive mind – chapter 2 – “lowliness” – putting self last, a servant's heart
3. A spiritual mind – chapter 3 – instead of minding “earthly things” – looking at life from God's perspective
4. A secure mind – chapter 4 – Spiritual resources: God's peace will guard our minds (v. 1-9), God's power (v. 10-13), and God's provision (v. 14-23).

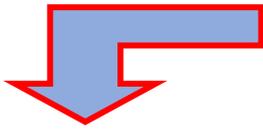
What are **4** things we can do?

1. Make sure we are a Christian.
2. Admit our failures – if double minded, proud, worldly-minded, or filled with worry, then these are sins that need to be confessed, repented of, and forsaken.
3. Surrender our mind to Christ daily. Are we pulled in two directions constantly? It ought not to be.
4. Look for opportunities to put our mind to work. When we're in the Word daily, we will see what we need to do, where to go, and why.

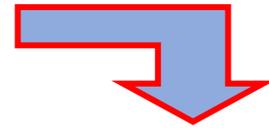
**J – JESUS** – first

**O – OTHERS** – second

**Y – YOU** – last



# SENIOR BALONEY



HAVE YOU EVER HEARD IT SAID, EITHER BY A CHRISTIAN PSYCHOLOGIST, OR A PREACHER ON TV, OR A TEACHER IN A CLASSROOM "YOU CAN'T LOVE OTHERS IF YOU DON'T LOVE YOURSELF?"

That is baloney pure and simple. In II Timothy starting in chapter 3 you can read a list of awful sins (aren't all sins awful?) during a period the Scriptures call "Perilous times."

Guess which one is the first sin listed! "Men shall be lovers of themselves...." We already do love ourselves. That's one of our problems.

We're self-centered, self-occupied, self-focused, self-protective, and selfish.

We defend ourselves, brag on ourselves, and promote ourselves. The Swedes (I can say this because I'm half Swedish and half Norwegian) have a phrase for this. SELF PRAISE STINKS. Jesus was the ultimate in humility, Read Phil. 2:1-8. "He made Himself of no reputation...."

Know how you can love others? Know why you can love others? Not because you love yourself, but because God loves you and God loves them. That's Biblical and not Baloney.

## OXYMORONS

Why is the third hand on the watch called the second hand?

If a word is misspelled in the dictionary, how would we ever know?

If Webster wrote the first dictionary, where did he find the words?

Why do we sing "Take me out to the ball game" when we are already there?

Why are they called "stands" when they are made for sitting?

Why is it called "after dark" when it really is "after light"?

Doesn't "expecting the unexpected" make the unexpected expected?

"Do you believe in life after death?" the boss asked one of his employees.

"Yes, sir," the clerk replied.

"That's good," the boss said. "I let you leave early yesterday to go to your grandmother's funeral, and she stopped in to see you."

A husband asks: "Why do you weep and snuffle over a TV program and the imaginary sadness of people you have never met"?

Wife: "For the same reason you scream and yell when a man you don't know makes a touchdown."

Officer to driver going the wrong way up a one way street, "And where do you think you are going?"

Driver: "I'm not sure, but I must be late as everyone else is coming back."

What is the longest word in the dictionary? The answer is SMILES. Why? See the reason on page 6.

## THOSE WHO WILL NOT MAKE IT TO HEAVEN

*“For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light, and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops” (Luke 12:2,3). “In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel” (Romans 2:16).*

1. **Blatant sinners** who have scoffed at Christianity, thumbed their noses at God, refused to hear and bow before Him but instead they followed their leader, Satan throughout life. These are the extremely wicked ones many of whom were world leaders – dictators, kings, despots including those who enslaved and/or killed thousands. Because God is just, they will receive what they deserve – eternal punishment in Hell where there are degrees of punishment.
2. **Apostates** (Luke 8:12-14; Luke 13:23-28; Heb. 3:12, 6:4-8, 10:26-31, and 1 John 2:19). Apostates are those who were enlightened but fell away. Only those who were never saved in the first place can fall away. They had “believed” for a while, and even professed to be saved, but never experienced regeneration. Most believe that the Bible teaches that when someone professes to receive Christ and later renounces Christ and Christianity, that person cannot be renewed unto repentance. When Jesus said in Matt. 7:23 *“I never knew you,”* He will not say *“I knew you once, but not any longer.”* An apostate is not simply a backslider. The latter is someone who is genuinely born again, but wanders, grows cold, and sins for a time, but comes back and is restored to fellowship once again. Only God knows the difference.
3. **The self-righteous** who think they’re going to Heaven because they’ve been upright, moral, and did many good deeds. They are simply “nice people” with good morals, but who are terribly mistaken concerning God’s requirement for salvation – repentance and faith in Christ who alone is righteous. The performing of good deeds stems from pride which is basic in mankind’s fallen nature. Although the motive for helping those in need may be very magnanimous in some, it is the false perception that this will earn them a home in Heaven. This mistaken belief will damn their souls. Being saved by faith comes first; then works will follow. It’s not the other way around. If we could get to Heaven by works, then Jesus died in vain. Instead, we sing *“What can wash away my sin; nothing but the blood of Jesus”* (Matt. 26:28; Rom. 5:9; Eph. 1:7 & 2:13; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:12,14).
4. **Procrastinators**. They had fully intended to get saved, but “not today.” Maybe tomorrow or later in life after they’ve sown their wild oats or served self. Alas, when death came they had run out of time. (Our pastor stated that there will probably be more in Hell due to procrastination than for any other reason.)
5. **Those leaders and followers who practiced a religion** – all kinds of religions – all promoting “works” for salvation. Some were clearly false, some preached a semblance of the truth mixed with heresy, and leaders of some churches who allowed them to be baptized and even join their church or organization in order to obtain salvation, but they were not members of God’s Church; the Body of Christ.
6. **Those who have never heard the Gospel**. (the following quotes are by Pastor Rob Decker): Men have two lights given to them: creation and conscience. So all men and women have some light and that light is enough, according to the Bible, to leave them without excuse. While all men don’t have enough light to save them, all men have enough light to damn them. Further, light refused increases darkness. They knew not God, the Bible says, and honored him not. Man refused the light. When light is refused it leads to darkness and their foolish hearts became darkened. They suppressed the truth in unrighteousness, and this leads to all kinds of sin. This is the point of Romans chapter one. On the other side, light received increases light. If they are open to God through their conscience and creation, then God sees to it they get further revelation. Then they have the potential to come to faith in Christ.

The person who responds to the limited light of creation and conscience, God sends more light. The work of the Holy Spirit to convict happens at the revelation stage of the Word of God, not the creation or conscience stage. The person who says ‘I see this creation and I make a decision to admit there is a God behind it all,’ is not seeking God. It is only an admission that someone is behind it all. They need the revelation of the gospel. So God sends more light because He first loves us. God takes the initiative to move into someone’s life. Why would a foolish darkened heart get a chance to see His grace when they may have lived a life of rejection and never admitted there is a God behind it all? So in essence, no one seeks God in the true sense of seeking redemption or righteousness. (Authors: Adrian Rogers on Bible Broadcasting Network Nov. 5, 2010, and Pastor Rob Decker)

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Answer to question about the longest word in the dictionary. It is "SMILES" and it's long because there's a mile between the two S's."

